

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MONTEV 04021 201734Z
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C O N F I D E N T I A L MONTEVIDEO 4021

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY TODMAN ONLY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP (TODMAN, TERENCE A.), SHUM, PGOV, PINT, UY
SUBJ: TODMAN VISIT - FOREIGN MINISTER'S WORKING LUNCHEON

FOR YOUR APPROVAL AND/OR CORRECTIONS.

1. SUMMARY. LONG WORKING LUNCHEON OF APPROXIMATELY FOUR HOURS PRODUCED EXTENSIVE GIVE AND TAKE ON BOTH SIDES WITH URUGUAYAN PARTICIPANTS RAISING AGAIN THEIR JUSTIFICATION FOR POLITICAL AND MILITARY ACTIONS IN 1972 AND THEREAFTER. THEY STRESSED APPARENT CONTRADICTIONS IN U.S. FOREIGN POLICY, WHAT THEY VIEWED AS UNBALANCED APPLICATION OF U.S. HUMAN RIGHTS THAT RELATE TO INTEGRITY OF THE PERSON. SPEAKERS WERE IMPASSIONED IN TONE AND URUGUAYAN PARTICIPANTS SEEM TO HAVE COME AWAY WITH IMPRESSION THAT THEY HAD SCORED WELL. END SUMMARY.

2. FOREIGN MINISTER ROVIRA'S FOUR-HOUR WORKING LUNCH AFTERNOON OF AUGUST 18 INCLUDED MILITARY REPRESENTATIVES, SEVERAL HIGH RANKING OFFICIALS OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY (THEY DID NOT SPEAK), SEVERAL HIGH MEDIA REPS AND ONE U.S. BUSINESSMAN. U.S. SIDE INCLUDED THE AMBASSADOR, LISTER, O'MAHONY, DCM, YOULE AND DAO. SUBSTANTIVE PART OF THIS AFFAIR TOOK PLACE AFTER LUNCH. DURING POST-LUNCHEON MEETING, TODMAN GAVE COMPLETE EXPOSITION OF U.S. POLICY TOWARD
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 MONTEV 04021 201734Z

CUBA AND MADE CLEAR THAT WE VIEWED THAT COUNTRY AS MAJOR VIOLATOR OF HUMAN RIGHTS. TODMAN ALSO DEVOED SUBSTANTIAL AMOUNT OF TIME TO ALL ASPECTS OF HUMAN RIGHTS AS SPECIFIED IN CHRISTOPHER SPEECH--INTEGRITY OF THE PERSON, SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, HEALTH, RIGHT TO WORK, OPPORTUNITY TO VOICE OPINIONS WITHOUT FEAR AND PARTICIPATE IN POLITICAL PROCESS. HE ALSO STRESSED THAT NO COUNTRY COULD LIVE FOR LONG IN AN ARMED ENCAMPMENT WITHOUT DOING

REAT HARM TO PRINCIPLES SHARED BY BOTH COUNTRIES. HE ASKED FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE STEPS THAT WOULD BE TAKEN BETWEEN NOW AND 1981 TO PREPARE FOR AND HOLD THE ANNOUNCED ELECTIONS.

3. AIR FORCE BRIGADIERES BORAD AND BENDAHAN WERE MOST OUTSPOKEN AND DOMINATED MOST OF THE DISCUSSION. BOTH SPOKE TO WHAT THEY VIEWED AS CONTRADICTIONS IN U.S. POLICY, DESERTING FRIENDS IN THEIR HOUR OF GREATEST NEED, AND FAILURE TO APPRECIATE THAT DETENTE HAD DEMONSTRATED THAT IT WORKED MORE TO THE ADVANTAGE OF THE SOVIET UNION THAN U.S. AND ITS ALLIES. ON ELECTIONS, BORAD SAID THAT IT WOULD NOT BE APPROPRIATE TO BRIEF TODMAN ON THE STEPS BETWEEN NOW AND 1981 SINCE THE URUGUAYAN PEOPLE SHOULD BE INFORMED FIRST. TODMAN REPLIED THAT HE REGRETTED THIS RESPONSE SINCE THIS WAS AFTER ALL A PRIVATE MEETING AND THE SUBJECT WAS AN IMPORTANT ONE. GENERAL GREGORIO ALVAREZ EXPRESSED VIEW THAT U.S. "MORALISTIC" STANCE ON HUMAN RIGHTS WAS WAIVED IN ONE HAND AS A GENERAL PRINCIPLE BUT THEN APPLIED UNEVENLY AS IT SUITED OUR INTERESTS. MINISTER OF ECONOMY AND FINANCE ARISMENDI COMMENTED THAT IT APPEARED TO HIM THAT U.S. POLICY WAS DIRECTED MORE AT "THIRD BASKET" OF HUMAN RIGHTS, I.E. STRESS ON RETURN TO DEMOCRATIC FORM OF GOVERNMENT, THAN ON OTHER TWO PRINCIPLES ABOUT WHICH TODMAN HAD TALKED. BRIGADIER CARDOSO, SECRETARY OF PLANNING, COORDINATION AND INFORMATION, GAVE LONG DEFENSE OF URUGUAY'S ACTIONS IN FACE OF SUBVERSION AND BREAKDOWN OF DEMOCRACY AND COMMENTED THAT HE HOPED WHAT TODMAN WOULD LEARN DURING HIS VISIT WOULD START WITH A DROP OF WATER AND THEN TURN INTO A CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 MONTEV 04021 201734Z

RIVER OF UNDERSTANDING OF THE URUGUAYAN REALITY. IN OTHER WORDS, THEY WERE RIGHT, WERE MISUNDERSTOOD AND IT WAS UP TO US TO CORRECT OUR PERCEPTIONS. ONE MEDIA REP CRITICIZED U.S. RESTRICTIONS ON IMPORTS OF URUGUAYAN BEEF CLAIMING THAT ACCEPTANCE IN EUROPEAN AND OTHER MARKETS INDICATED DISCRIMINATION.

4. TODMAN AGAIN DEFENDED OUR POLICIES TOWARD CUBA EXPLAINING THAT THERE WERE ENORMOUS DIFFICULTIES TO BE OVERCOME BUT THAT WE CONSIDERED IT VITAL TO BE ABLE TO BE ON THE SPOT SO AS TO WORK OUT THE MAJOR PROBLEMS THAT FACED US THERE. HE COUNTERED ARGUMENT THAT DETENTE WORKED ONLY TO ADVANTAGE OF SOVIETS. HE RETURNED TO HUMAN RIGHTS THEME AGAIN EXPLAINING OUR STANCE AND THE NEED FOR THEM TO TAKE STEPS TO IMPROVE THEIR INTERNATIONAL IMAGE. HE AGREED THAT IT WAS COMPLICATED POLICY ISSUE, BUT ARGUED THAT SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES DICTATED MANNER IN WHICH ISSUES SHOULD BE APPROACHED. THIS DID NOT MEAN THAT POLICY WAS BEING APPLIED IN DISCRIMINATORY MANNER OR SELECTIVELY. PRINCIPLES REMAINED AS MAJOR THRUST OF CARTER ADMINISTRATION. TODMAN ALSO STRESSED NEED FOR CONTINUING DIALOGUE WITH LATIN AMERICA ON MAJOR WORLD ISSUES. ADMITTED WE HAD NOT DONE WELL ON THIS IN PAST.

5. COMMENT: FOLLOWING BORAD'S RATHER CURT REFUSAL TO EXPLAIN THE STEPS PLANNED TO PREPARE THE COUNTRY FOR ELECTIONS IN 1981, OTHERS, INCLUDING GENERAL ALVAREZ, SOMEWHAT EMBARRASSED THAT TODMAN'S QUESTION HAD NOT BEEN ADDRESSED, ATTEMPTED ANSWERS. THEIR ATTEMPTS, HOWEVER, SHED LITTLE LIGHT ON WHETHER THE GOU HIGH COMMAND HAS REALLY CAREFULLY CONSIDERED THE SUBJECT.
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